The role of universities in a Europe of knowledge – *Higher Education*

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A European HE system in transformation

- Internationalisation and globalisation: from cooperation to competition
- ‘Borderless’ higher education: new delivery modes, new providers
- Differentiation of learners, learning needs and institutions
- Lifelong learning as new paradigm
- Liberalisation with or without GATS
Knowledge society

- expansion of demand, new forms of demand
- knowledge creation & dissemination
  - new modes of knowledge production
  - new modes of knowledge distribution
- thus, new expectations and opportunities for Us
- de-institutionalisation of learning
  - blurring boundaries between formal, non-formal and informal learning
- new qualifications and credentials, but also shift to recognition of competencies
Bologna process

- unparalleled dynamic supported by governments, institutions, students and stakeholders
- uneven national awareness & implementation
- Berlin: emphasis put on qa&a was necessary
- common objectives and benchmarking
- Bologna now part of EU *acquis communautaire*
- more steps are necessary to integrate Bologna fully in Lisbon-Barcelona agenda
Need for a European regulatory framework in HE

- subsidiarity still the guiding concept?
- Bologna: from ministerial initiative to integrated European approach
- number of issues cannot be solved at national level alone
  - licensing of providers
  - quality assurance / accreditation
  - qualifications framework
  - recognition of qualifications
Elements of an agenda

- licensing of providers
  - European-wide registration of providers
  - regulated access of new types of providers
  - transnational provision: adoption of UNESCO code of good practice
- institutions should give full transparency to their status and the academic & professional recognition of their qualifications
Elements of an agenda

- quality assurance and accreditation: the Berlin agenda:
  - ‘common standards, procedures and guidelines’
  - ‘peer-review’ system step towards certification or registration (‘meta-accreditation’) of agencies
- is ENQA capable of realising this?
- enormous national variety in qa&a systems but also convergence in methodologies
Elements of an agenda

- different levels of QA&A
  - Institutional: internal QA arrangements
  - National: external QA agencies, variety, mixed ownership and legitimacy (state, academia, professions, …)
  - European:
    - Trends III: nearly 50% of HEIs favour European accreditation
  - Global: European approach could influence global debate
Internal quality culture

External quality assurance

National (meta)accreditation

European (meta)accreditation

???
Elements of an agenda

- variety of strategies in qa&a
  - Strengthening institutional quality culture
    - EUA QC project
  - Enhancing convergence to comparable criteria and methodologies
    - ENQA, TEEP, INQAAHE, EUA Code of principles, Berlin
- Mutual recognition of agencies and outcomes
- Monitoring (meta-evaluation) of QA
- real European approach: ECA
Elements of an agenda

- main challenges
  - multilateral approach is necessary
  - more work is needed on quality concept (basic quality versus excellence), standards, etc.
  - extension of qa&a to non-traditional delivery modes and providers
  - radical move to outcomes-based qa&a
  - issue of quality burden and cost
Elements of an agenda

- qualifications framework
  - more work is needed on definition of qualification levels, outcomes, etc.
    - Dublin descriptors
    - Tuning
  - not only of Ba/Ma degrees, but also of sub-degree qualifications, credits, etc.
  - for qa&a, credit transfer, recognition of prior learning, lifelong learning, etc.
Elements of an agenda

- recognition of qualifications
  - not be very optimistic of automatic progress in recognition because of convergence in qa&a
  - more and new initiatives are needed
    - ratification of Lisbon Convention
    - bilateral mutual recognition agreements
  - important role of professions in mra’s
    - e.a. Washington Accord
  - information systems
Elements of an agenda

- other challenges
  - real integration of lifelong learning paradigm in education mission of universities
  - stronger integration of ERA and EHEA